

Welcome!

First Congregational Church of Webster Groves
United Church of Christ

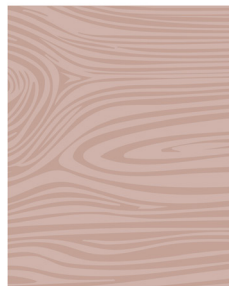


Seek Christ in each. Serve God in all.

SUNDAY, MARCH 15, 2026

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

“ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING” SPECIAL OFFERING



FOURTH SUNDAY
in
LENT

*We respond to God's call by welcoming everyone
regardless of ability, age, ethnicity, race, gender identity,
sexual orientation or socio-economic background.*

*To proclaim in word and deed the love of Christ,
we affirm that all may share in the full life, ministry,
fellowship, responsibilities and blessing of our congregation.*

*No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here.*

Order of Worship

An asterisk () indicates the Congregation standing, in body or in spirit.*

PRELUDE *Blue Seven* Sonny Rollins
*At this time, we invite you to complete an entry in the Friendship Booklet
and to silence the ringer on any cellular device you may have with you.*

WELCOME Andrea Welnick, *Liturgist*

TOLLING OF THE BELL

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

INTROIT *Prayer* Keith Jarrett
Lyrics by Cliff Aerie

In the midst of all chaos I offer a prayer.
As the world turns around me in pain and despair,
I remember your promise that flows everywhere.

In the twilight and darkness when day turns to night,
In each moment of sadness, you offer me sight.
I remember your promise and enter your light.

In the touch of another I sense you are near,
Sharing moments of blessing there's nothing to fear.
I remember your promise and my way seems clear.

***RAISING THE COVENANT** *Covenant of 1977*

**We who are called of God into this Christian community
covenant together: to seek to know the will of God, to
experience the joy and struggle of discipleship, to proclaim in
word and deed the love of Christ, and to work for peace and
justice among all people. We trust God's promise of grace and
forgiveness and the presence of the Holy Spirit in our trials and
rejoicing.**

***GATHERING HYMN** *Be Thou My Vision* tr. Mary E. Byrne, alt.

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
Nought be all else to me save that thou art.
Thou my best thought by day or by night,
Waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word,
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord,
Thy Holy Spirit my rebirth has done –
Thou in me dwelling and I with thee one.

Riches I heed not, nor loud, empty praise,
Thou mine inheritance, now and always;
Thou and thou only, first in my heart,
Regent of heaven, my treasure thou art.

Regent of heaven, my victory won,
May I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

***RITUAL OF APPROACH**

*Prayer (Unison)

Psalm 23

Authorized Version (KJV)

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death! I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever. Amen.

*Singing God's Glory

Sing Amen (Masithi)
No. 760 – New Century Hymnal

S. C. Molefe

NOT FOR CHILDREN ONLY

Sing

Rev. Cliff Aerie

*Young people are invited forward for a time of enrichment.
Afterward, they may proceed to Kids Church or return to their seats.*

THE WORD SHARED

From the Gospels

John 9

Pew Bible, p. 976

Response

Liturgist: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the people.

People: Thanks be to God.

MESSAGE OF THE DAY

“The Mercy of Seeing: Part 2” Rev. David Denoon, Pastor

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Music Meditation

Contemplation

McCoy Tyner

Lyrics by Chuck Marhonic

I open myself to you,
I open myself to you, Lord.
You are the light of my life.

Help me to see what you want me to.

I offer myself to you,
I offer myself to you, Lord.
You are the light of my life.

Help me to be what you want me to be.

We Share Our Joys and Concerns

When you speak a prayer request aloud, please bear in mind the privacy of those for whom you are praying, as this worship is being live-streamed.

Prayer of the Day

Prayer of Our Savior

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory for ever. Amen.

WE SHARE OUR BLESSINGS WITH OTHERS

Opportunities to Give and Gather

*Song of Praise

Praise God for Our Blessings

Tune: JACOB'S LADDER

**Praise God, praise God for our blessings!
Praise God, praise God for our blessings!
Praise God, praise God for our blessings!
Sisters, brothers, all.**

*Prayer of Dedication

Generous God, we offer gifts in the spirit of generosity and with a heart full of gratitude for what we've been given. Our offerings are one way of showing our commitment to sharing with those who are in need, neighbors near and far, whom we are unlikely to meet. We offer our gifts with a cheerful heart as our love offering to siblings we may never meet. Bless the offerings we make, just as you have blessed each of us, with a full measure of your grace. In Christ's name, Amen.

*PARTING HYMN

Open My Eyes

Clara H. Scott

Tune: OPEN MY EYES

Open my eyes, that I may see glimpses of truth thou hast for me;
place in my hands the wonderful key that shall unclasp and set me free.

Silently now I wait for thee, ready, my God, thy will to see.

Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!

Open my ears, that I may hear voices of truth thou sendest clear;
and while the wave-notes fall on my ear, everything false will disappear.

Silently now I wait for thee, ready, my God, thy will to see.

Open my ears, illumine me, Spirit divine!

Open my mouth, and let me bear gladly the warm truth everywhere;
open my heart and let me prepare love with thy children thus to share.

Silently now I wait for thee, Ready, my God, thy will to see.

Open my heart, illumine me, Spirit divine!

*BENEDICTION

*PARTING WORDS

Liturgist: Our worship has ended.

People: **Let our service begin.**

POSTLUDE

Amazing Grace

John Newton

During the Postlude, we encourage you to greet those around you, or to remain at your seat to enjoy the music until it has ended. In the spirit of diversity, please be attentive to the possibility that one who is seated may be meditating.

Our thanks to the Oikos Jazz Ensemble for their participation in the leadership of worship today. They are Rev. **Cliff Aerie**, saxophone; **Carolbeth True**, piano; **Glen Smith**, bass; **David True**, percussion; and **Kim Fuller-Barnes**, vocals.

The Oikos Jazz Ensemble is an outreach of our Ministry of Imagination, Creativity, and the Arts (MICA). MICA takes part in Sunday morning jazz worship, six times a year, and conducts two seasonal programs – Jazz Noel and Good Friday Blues – in addition to other occasional performances. If you would like to support MICA with a gift separate from your contribution to the church, please do so with

- a cash offering (in an envelope thus designated),

- a check made payable to the church with “MICA” written in the memo line, or
- an electronic contribution on the Donate page of our website (find “MICA” in the pull-down menu)

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### Connecting Remotely to Worship

To view worship livestream and videos online, go to [YouTube.com/@1stChurchWG](https://www.youtube.com/@1stChurchWG)

### Wifi Connection

Please connect to the network **first\_church\_guest** using the passcode **firstguest**

### Can You Offer a Ride?

If you can provide transportation to either of our non-driving church members, some Sunday soon, please find their **signup sheets on clipboards in the office** to volunteer a ride.

### Hearing-Assisted System

Take advantage of our hearing-assisted system! Simply download the **Listen Everywhere** app from the App Store or Google Store. If your phone is incompatible with the **Listen** system, we also have stand-alone receivers. Please see an attendant at the A/V station for assistance.

### How to Donate to First Congregational Church

If you would like to support First Church with a monetary gift, here are a few ways to do so:

- Take advantage of the brass offering plate on the small table in the Narthex
- Send a check made payable to **First Congregational Church, 10 W. Lockwood Ave., Webster Groves, MO 63119**
- Visit **FirstChurchWG.org/donate**
- Scan the **QR code**.



### Let Breeze Serve as Your Church Directory

**Access the church directory or check on your donations on the Breeze app!**

Here are a few simple steps to access info from and about the church on your personal device:

1. Download the Breeze app via the App Store (iPhone) or Google Play store (Android)
2. The app will ask you to provide your Church ID, which is: **fccwgstlmo**
3. Use your Username and Password to log into the app! (If you don't know your Username, contact Office Administrator Adam Levin at [admin@firstchurchwg.org](mailto:admin@firstchurchwg.org).)

### Sunday Volunteers

Please consider signing up for one or more of the following opportunities, by going to the links next to the volunteer roles (top of next page). Worship staff will provide training as needed!

**Liturgist** – [bit.ly/Liturgist-2026](https://bit.ly/Liturgist-2026)

**Slideshow Presenter** – [bit.ly/FCCWG-Slides](https://bit.ly/FCCWG-Slides) • **A/V Volunteer** – [bit.ly/SE-Corner](https://bit.ly/SE-Corner)

### Actors and Readers for Good Friday Blues

This year's Good Friday Blues, at 7pm on April 3, introduces us to Niki and Ari - two people who have just experienced a traumatic scene that makes them wonder whether they could have done anything to prevent it. Major questions about faith and responsibility tinge their conversation as they process what has happened. And it all arises in the Shadow of the Cross.

We're looking for three actors and three readers to assist the Oikos Ensemble in this provocative and poignant performance. Actors will have rehearsals between March 23 and 30, and all will be needed for a dress rehearsal at 4pm on Good Friday (supper provided). *If you would be interested in participating as an actor or reader, please contact the Pastor.*

### **Rev. Jan Barnes Leads Worship, March 22**

Pastor Dave Denoon will be away from March 17 to 22. Next Sunday, we look forward to Rev. Jan Barnes leading worship. If Pastoral Care is needed, please contact the office to be connected with the minister on call.

### **Parish Life Update**

The Parish Life Ministry continues its work in helping to provide meaningful worship experiences and serving our members in diverse ways. Check the [Covenant News](#) for an update, including **the announcement of this year's Gala theme!**

### **New on Sundays – Door Security Policy**

As part of our efforts toward greater safety and security, a new policy has been adopted by the First Friends. Almost all doors will now be locked at 10:00AM on Sundays. To access the building after worship has begun, please go to the Narthex entrance (east side of the building). The First Friends will let you in.

### **Easter Flowers**

We are now seeking donations for the Easter Flower fund. Purchasing the lilies and hydrangeas for Easter each year gets pricey. If you would like to offset First Church's cost as well as dedicate your donation in the Easter bulletin, pick up a form from the Narthex today.

### **First Friends Team Leaders Discuss Church Emergency Plan, Today**

Next Sunday after worship, Sharon Love will chair a meeting with First Friends Team Leaders in the Library. They are in the process of updating First Church's Emergency Plan, which was created in 2017. The meeting will begin, about 11:30AM. Team Leaders, please feel free to bring your beverages and snacks with you from Coffee Fellowship.

### **Movie Night with Sts. Clare & Francis Saturday, March 21, 3:00PM – “The Quilters”**

Join Sts. Clare & Francis Church, to watch *The Quilters*, a documentary about a restorative justice program inside a Missouri maximum-security prison. Guest Speaker Patty Berger of the group All of Us or None (learn more at [PrisonersWithChildren.org/all-of-us-or-none](http://PrisonersWithChildren.org/all-of-us-or-none)) will address challenges facing the prison system. Worship in Sample Chapel will follow at 5PM, with dinner and discussion afterward, in the Inglis Room. RSVP to Therese at 314-607-7087.

### **Adult Ed: Immigration Law, March 22**

Lynn Mark, Accredited Representative in the Immigration Law Program of the Legal Services of Eastern Missouri will discuss the latest information on happenings within their practice in relationship to Immigration and ICE. There are so many changes coming that it's hard to predict what will be on the agenda.

### **Lady Elect Field Trip, March 24**

Lady Elect will be going on a field trip to the St. Louis Genealogical Society on Tuesday, March 24, at 11:30. Please arrive promptly at 11:30, so that we can observe the researchers at work before they have to leave. **The site is located in Sunnen Industrial Park at 4 Sunnen Drive, Suite 140, St. Louis, MO, and is approximately 4.5 miles from church.** Our visit will include a tour of the facility and a talk about starting your own family research. So, bring your questions. Also, please bring your lunch/beverage. Linda will provide a dessert. All are welcome. Text your RSVP to Marilyn at (314) 894-2046. (Include your name in the text.)

### **Habitat For Humanity Workdays, May and October**

On **May 16**, we'll combine with Hope UCC/Isaiah 58 to supply 10 workers. On **October 3**, we will join congregants from St. Lucas UCC to again supply 10 workers. Closer to those dates, they will give us locations. Clipboard sign-up sheets for both dates are in the office.

### **Annual Reports Due, End of March**

If you're the chair of a Committee or Ministry, or you lead an organization at First Church, please make sure to email your annual report to [admin@firstchurchwg.org](mailto:admin@firstchurchwg.org) before the end of March. If you're struggling with what to write, take Linda Kopetti's advice: "What would you want your group to know about this year, five years from now?" You're also welcome to contact Adam with any questions.

### **Immigrant Luncheon at Webster Hills UMC, March 28**

Support our immigrant and refugee neighbors at the International Supper Club Luncheon, 11:30AM on March 28. Tickets are \$40. Thanks to Doug Miller for bringing this up!

### **March Birthdays**

|                           |                         |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| Elle Polaske - March 5    | Lauren Gomez - March 20 |
| Ruthie Meyer - March 6    | Jim Harris - March 21   |
| Emery Fisher - March 9    | Casen Hood - March 21   |
| Brennan Butler - March 12 | Nick Suber - March 25   |
| Kris Rinne - March 14     | Amy Byrne - March 26    |
| Kitty Pearl - March 18    | Danny Smith - March 29  |

### **March Meal-A-Month Shopping List**

Canned Ham • Macaroni and Cheese • Canned Green Vegetable (low or no salt)  
Canned Fruit in own juices • Powdered Milk, shelf stable milk, soy milk  
Toothbrushes • Toothpaste • Dental Floss

### **What's Going on at First Church**

For a complete schedule of church events, observances, and building use, please visit our online calendar at

[FirstChurchWG.org/Calendar](http://FirstChurchWG.org/Calendar)

#### **Sunday, March 15**

##### **Fourth Sunday in Lent**

##### **"One Great Hour of Sharing"**

**9:45AM** Nursery Care Available

**10:00AM** Worship (Jazz)

**10:15AM** Kids' Church

**11:05AM** Coffee Fellowship

**11:30AM** First Friends Leaders

Emergency Plan Discussion - Library

#### **Monday, March 16**

**7:00PM** Executive Ministry - Zoom

**7:00PM** Scouting BSA Troop 301 - Memorial

#### **Wednesday, March 18**

**9:30AM** Yoga with Jeanene - Inglis Room

#### **Thursday, March 19**

**6:00PM** Canterbury Bells - Sanctuary

**7:30PM** Chancel Choir - Sanctuary

#### **Saturday, March 20**

**8:00AM-12:00PM** Scouts Rummage Sale - East Lot

#### **Sunday, March 22**

##### **Fifth Sunday in Lent**

**9:45AM** Nursery Care Available

**10:00AM** Worship

**10:15AM** Kids' Church

**11:05AM** Coffee Fellowship

**11:20AM** Adult Ed - "Immigration and ICE"



10 West Lockwood Avenue  
Webster Groves, MO 63119  
314-962-0475  
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## Contact Information

Moderator – Chris von Weise  
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Onyeka Igboanuzue

Director of Ministry of Imagination, Creativity  
and the Arts (MICA) – Rev. Cliff Aerie  
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**THE VISION** of First Congregational Church of Webster Groves, United Church of Christ, is to be a dynamic Christian community expressing God's love, hope, joy, and peace for all people.

### **OUR MISSION is to provide:**

- Worship that praises God
  - ◇ Shows commitment to the teachings of Jesus
  - ◇ Celebrates the Holy Spirit in ways that express the diversity of our experiences
  - ◇ Encourages spiritual growth and commitment
- Educational activities that promote faith and intellectual growth for children and for adults.
- Advocacy and care for those in need in our community and throughout the world.
- Community that seeks justice, loves kindness, and walks humbly.
- Hope, love, and encouragement to all who seek our support.
- Grace and forgiveness for ourselves and all who seek the ministries we share in worship, music, and fellowship with others on life's journey.

## Follow us on

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